

“I think this is a great program”:  
using qualitative and quantitative  
data to assess a Personal Librarian  
program

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**<http://bit.ly/OLA2017>**

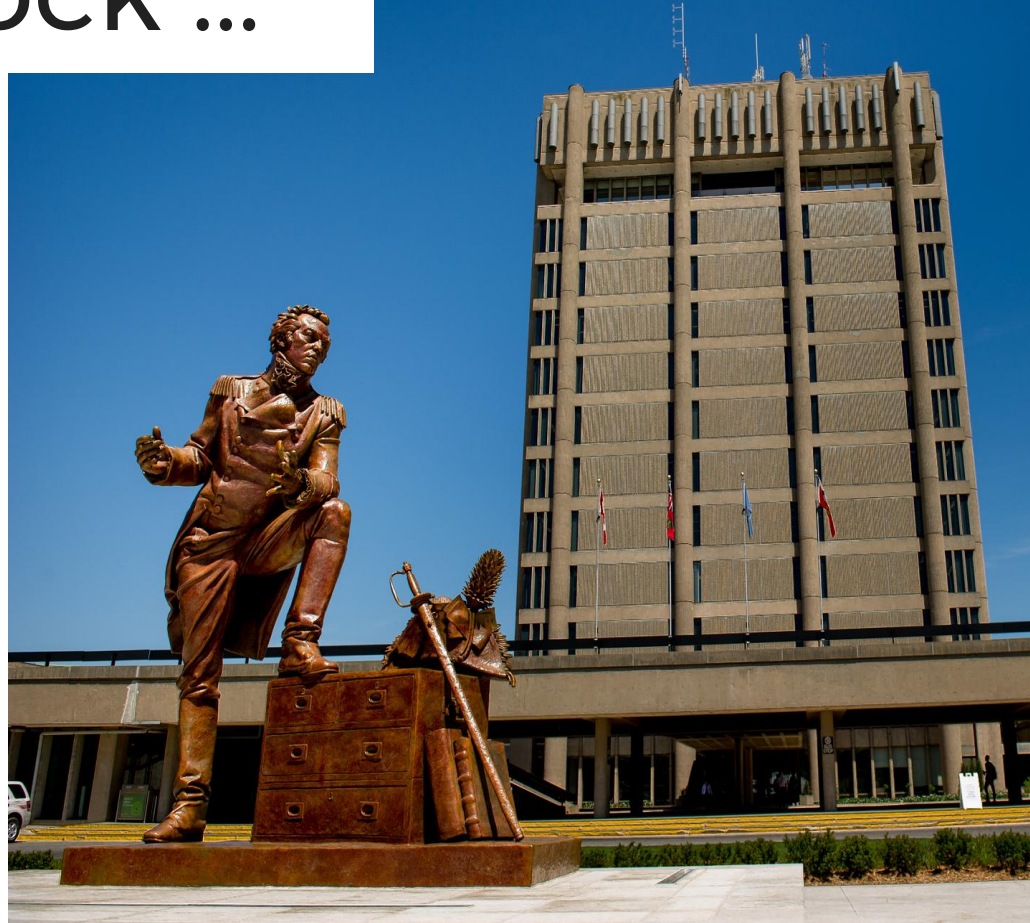
# Outcomes

- Characteristics of Brock Personal Librarian program
- Advantages and challenges of assessment methods including:
  - Online surveys
  - Participation metrics
  - Email marketing metrics
- Ideas for growth and assessment



# A bit about Brock ...

- St. Catharines, ON
- Young, growing, dynamic
- 18,700 students, including 1600 grads
- 6,000 first-year students (4,000 new to Brock)
- No first-year integration program



# James A. Gibson Library

- Liaisons for all programs
  - 10 librarians with liaison roles
- High librarian:student ratio
- No cash :- (





# Personal Librarian program

2015-16:

- 9 librarians[opt-in]
- 29 programs/depts
- 3,045 students
- Mostly undergrad

2016-17:

- 8 librarians
- 27 programs/depts
- 2,726 students
- Mostly undergrad, some grad and upper level

## James A. Gibson Library

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### Your Personal Librarian

Pictured above L to R: Linda Lowry, John Dingle, Marcie Jacklin, Elizabeth Yates, Heather Whipple, Colleen Mackinnon, Justine Cotton, Karen Bordonaro. Not pictured: Jennifer Thiessen, Michael Carrigan, Lydia Thorne.

### What is the Personal Librarian Program?

The Personal Librarian program is designed to introduce students entering Brock University to the many resources, tools and services available through the Library. Students in select programs will be contacted by their personal librarian occasionally throughout the year.

  
**Ask**  
Chat is closed  
Click to send an email

**NEWS**  
Ask a Librarian this Spring and Summer

**Quick Search**

Quick search

in SuperSearch ▾

2015-16 Personal Librarian team

# Nuts and bolts

- 3-person planning team
- Partners:
  - Registrar's office
  - Brock Marketing & Communications
- 3 messages/term



Image: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nut\\_\(hardware\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nut_(hardware))



## James A. Gibson Library

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Dear Subscriber,

Welcome back! Hope you had fun over the holidays and that your Winter term is off to a great start.

This month, I'd like to suggest something I think could really help with your assignments -- looking at a book (or two).

When you need to learn about a new subject, books can really help you understand it by giving you the background, key concepts, vocabulary and other important facts. And you'll impress your profs :-)

- It's easy to **find good books and e-books.**

Here's a [guide](#) on how to find them at Brock. Or visit the Library



**Your personal librarian**  
([Learn More](#))



**Elizabeth Yates**

Liaison Librarian for Applied  
Health Sciences

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Dear Subscriber,

Welcome to Brock from your [Personal Librarian!](#)

As your Personal Librarian, I'll be contacting you throughout the academic year to let you know how the Library can help you succeed as graduate student here at Brock. I'm happy to hear from you, too, so feel free to send me an email anytime at [jthiessen@brocku.ca](mailto:jthiessen@brocku.ca).

So, let's start off with a few basics:

- The Library has [special spaces for graduate students](#) on the sixth floor: there's a study room and meeting room just for you - no undergrads allowed.
- Got a question? AskUs at the desk on the Library's main floor or head to the Peer Assistants (with the orange shirts) near the Library Starbucks.
- Your library card ... is your student ID



Your personal librarian  
([Learn More](#))



**Jennifer Thiessen**

Liaison Librarian for Education

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# Assessing success

Are we achieving planned outcomes?

- Decreasing student anxiety
- Enhancing use of library services and resources
- How assess?
  - Survey
  - Tracking replies
  - Email marketing metrics

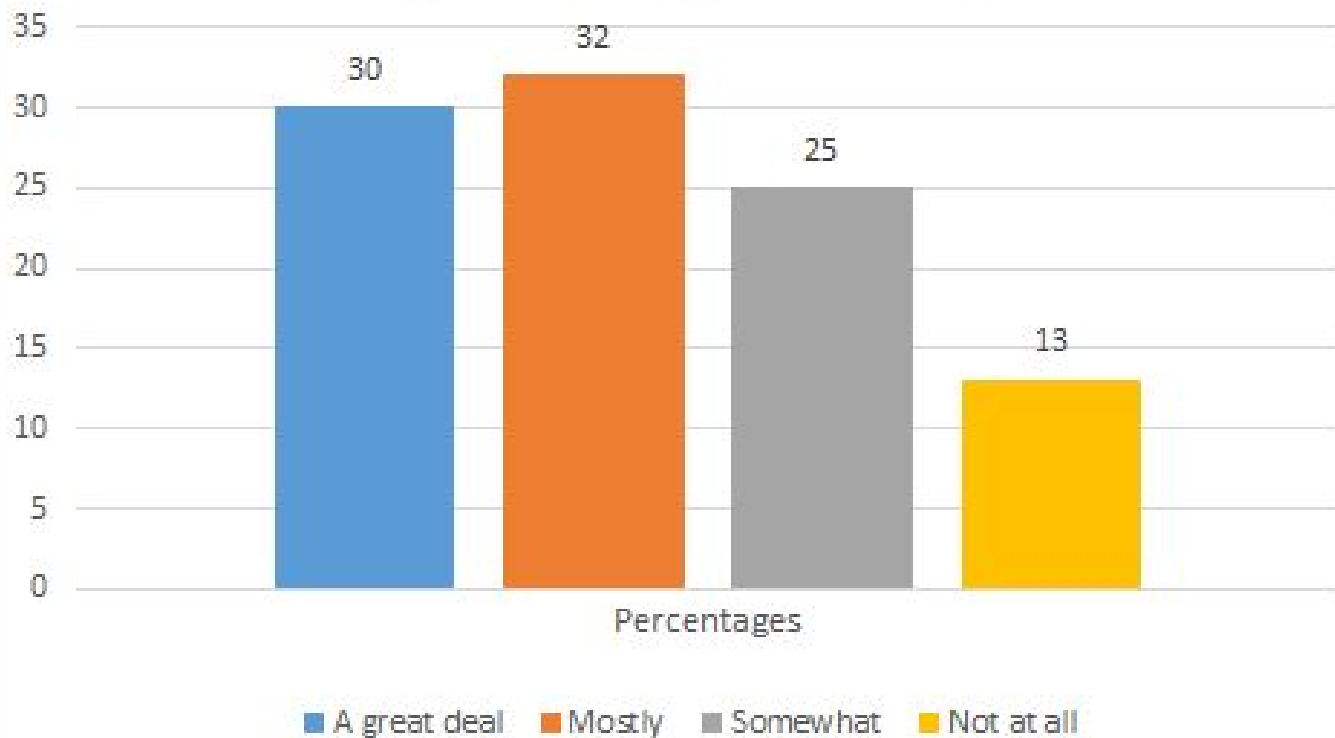


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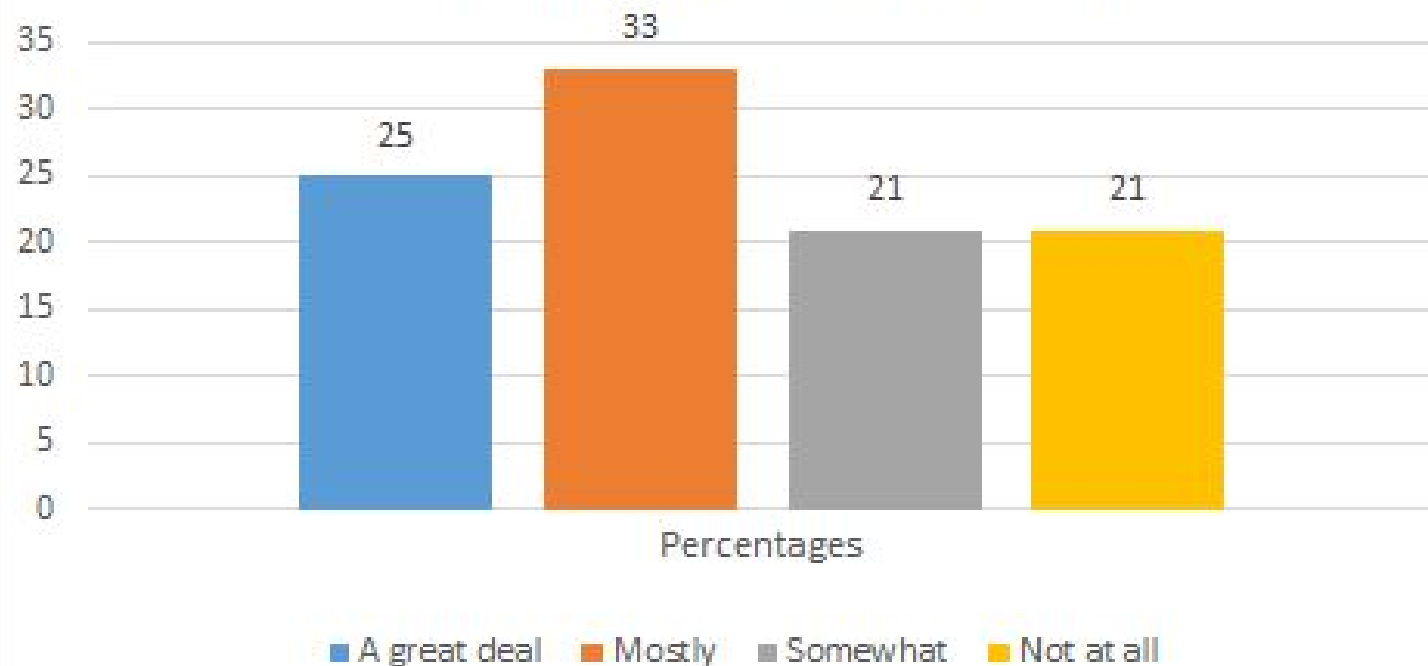
# Surveys

- Linked in last April message
- Mix of qualitative & quantitative questions
- Pool of 360 responses over two years
- 2 x \$25 prizes
  - 2015-16 -- 267 responses - response rate of 9%
  - 2014-15 - 93 responses - response rate of 7%

## Having a Personal Librarian increased my confidence using Brock Libraries



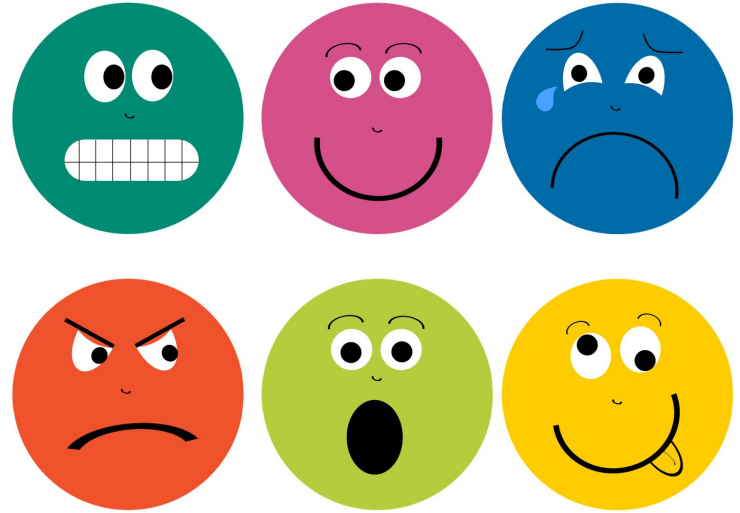
## Having a Personal Librarian eased my transition to university





# Qualitative data

- capture descriptive data
- gain deeper understanding
- identify gaps/opportunities



# Decrease student anxiety?

“[my PL] was super friendly, so that always helped!”

“She has made me feel welcome to seek her advice.”

“I love the librarian”

“...provided a wonderful and important overview...and **I gained more confidence**”

“...comfortable...”

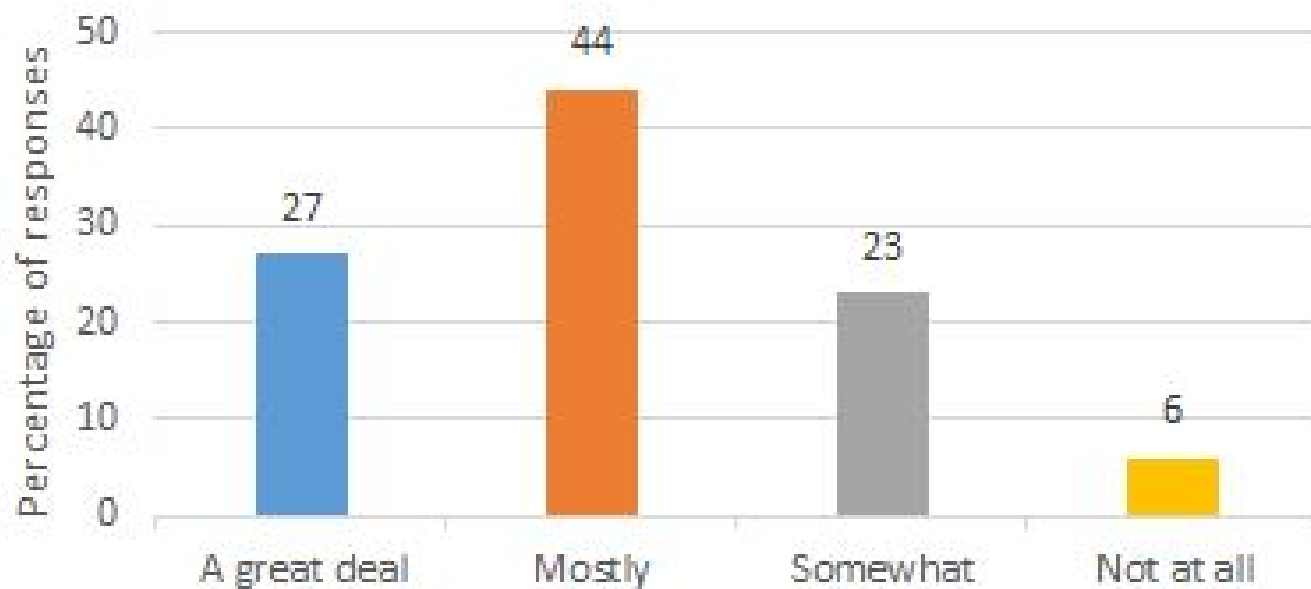
“...confident...”

“**I know so much more than I did before!**”



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## Emails from my Personal Librarian were helpful



# Are emails helpful/optimal?

“I already get a lot of e-mails from other services at Brock. **At least the ones from the library are usually helpful.**”

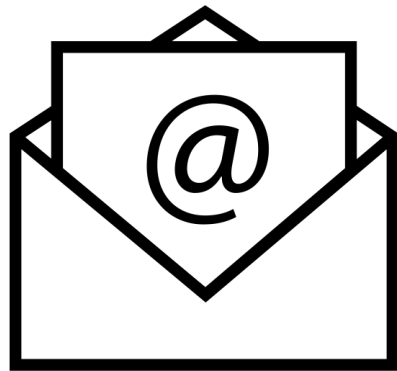
“...easiest and quickest way...”

“...no pressure...”

“...made it easier to know what was going on in the library”

Some:

Nope, just deleted the emails.

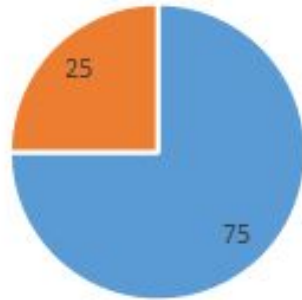


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Having a Personal Librarian introduced me to  
library services and/or resources  
that I didn't know about



■ Yes ■ No

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1. SuperSearch
2. Library website
3. Silent or quiet study areas
4. Exams from previous years
5. Group study room

# What did we miss?

**Are there other services/resources you would have liked to hear about? [2015-16]**

Most responses: “No. She gave me all the information I needed.”

- Book recommendations
- What can the help desk do for me?
- Workshops
- Career resources

# Did you contact your Personal Librarian?



# Student responses

2014-15	2015-16	Sept.-Dec. 2016
28	22	19

“Thank you for your support this year”

“I’d like to book an appointment”

“Can you let me know if we have access to the Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy?”



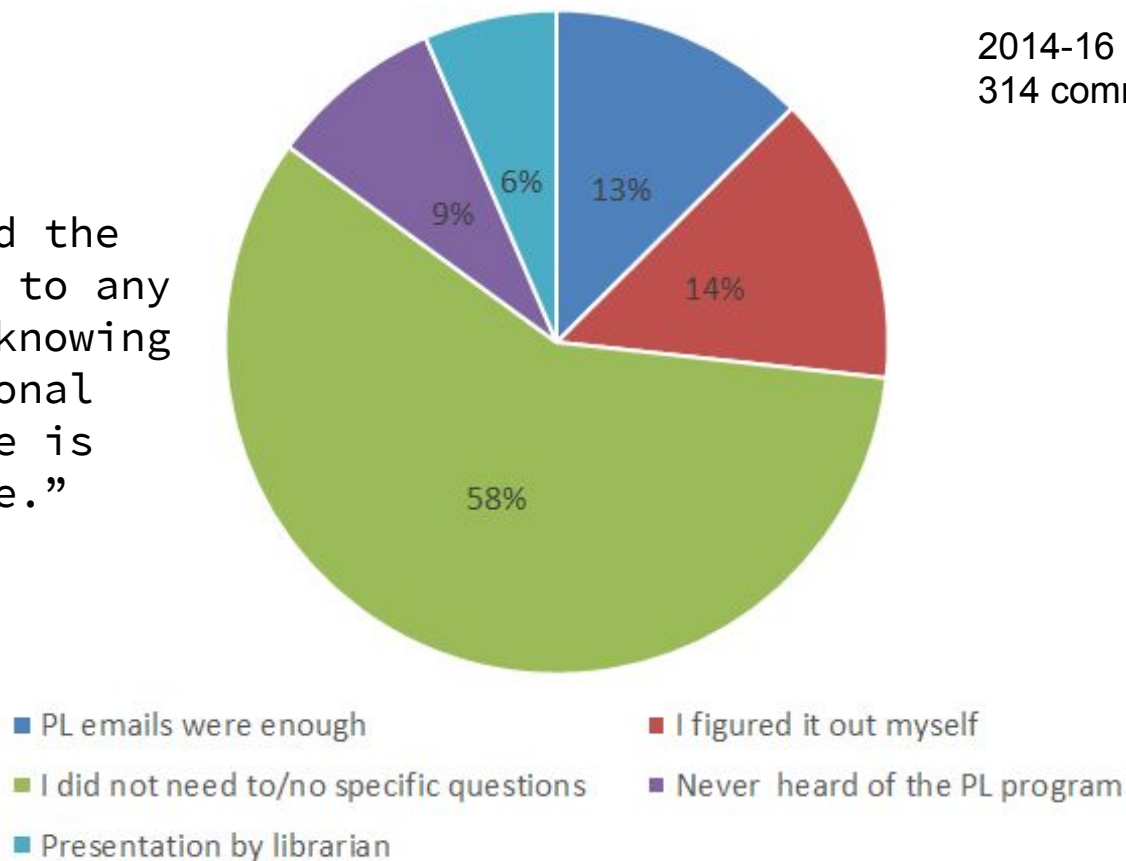
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“I haven't required the Library's services to any great extent, but knowing that I have a personal librarian available is incredibly positive.”

### Why didn't you contact your PL?

2014-16  
314 comments



# What else can numbers tell us?



Email marketing  
metrics: why?

- Another facet of assessment
- Provides benchmarks

# What is email marketing?

“... sending email messages with the purpose of **enhancing the relationship** of a merchant with its current or previous customers, to encourage **customer loyalty** and repeat business, [sic] and to **acquire new customers** ...

--[Wikipedia](#)

# What Is Professional Email Marketing?

By the above definition, any email communication sent on behalf of a business or organization qualifies as email marketing – even if it only contains text. Professional Email Marketing is employing a service or program that provides:



**Permission Based List Building** - Also known as “double opt-in,” this is the creation of an email list by providing a signup box for prospective email contacts and confirming their approval with a follow-up email.



**List Management** - The ability to organize, edit, segment, grow and manage a database of customer or client email contact information.



**Rich Content Integration** - The addition of graphics, audio, video and text using templates and a “drag-n-drop” editor



**Campaign Creation** - The capability to organize and structure large volumes of email messages by theme, branding and schedule.



**Unsubscribe Features** - Providing the potential for an email contact to quickly and successfully be removed from future campaigns should the person no longer wish to participate in your promotions.



**Online Reporting** - The means to track the sending of individual email campaigns, at what rates they were opened and which emails were “bounced” as undeliverable to bad addresses.

# Email marketing metrics

## **Opens:**

“Open” refers to an HTML email message whose viewing is recorded by a clear 1X1 pixel image. When a message is opened and images are enabled, the image calls the server and the message is then counted as an open.”

## **Clicks:**

“Measures the percentage of email messages that drew at least one click.”

# OPEN RATE

YEAR	BROCK	EDUCATION BENCHMARK
2014-15	20%	20.9%
2015-16	66%	27.2%
2016-17 Sept-Dec	69%	N/A

# CLICK RATE

YEAR	BROCK	EDUCATION BENCHMARK
2014-15	5%	2.9%
2015-16	4%	4.6%
2016-17 Sept-Dec	5.6%	N/A



# Positive comments

“Very good program that should be kept to continue making students feel comfortable with the library staff as well as feeling confident in the library”

“I would say, it is best to have a personal librarian.”

“I think this is a great program, very useful for students and one that I hope to use in my future years at Brock!”

“It was fantastic.”



Cherry blossoms at Brock University, Jocelyn Titone

# Other comments

Some students wanted:

- More frequent emails
- More variety of help
- More textbooks to rent
- Separate emails for graduate students  
[we do!]
- More interactive
- Info that was more applicable to my area of study



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# Issues and solutions

“I was unaware that I had a personal librarian”

“Didn’t even know that this was a thing to be honest”

Lack of direct student response

Clarify PL objective and role

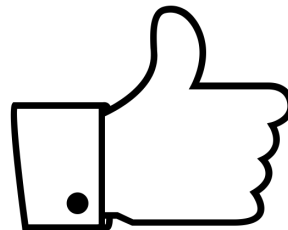
More promotion?

Expand program to specialized population groups

# Librarian feedback

Survey and discussion

How did it go? What can we do differently?



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Thumbs up	Concerns
Pre-written messages by PL team	Messages too generic
Meeting to send messages together	Lack of direct student response
Great templates	Cumbersome email system
	Staffing challenges

# How we've responded

Summarize PL program and purpose in September and January emails

Include interactive polls

Remind librarians to promote PL program to students

Increase empathic tone

Expand to online/distance program

# What about other PL programs?

- U.S.-centric
- Little published literature, even less focusing on assessment
- Standard response rate @ 7-15% (Yale, University of Toronto)



# Canadian PL programs



- University of Toronto:
  - 2015-16 - 45 librarians, 2092 1st year Arts & Sciences students
  - Assessment: responses (down a bit), evaluation survey
- University of Alberta:
  - Aboriginal students: 65% open rate, 4% click rate
  - Expanding to international students
- Seneca College
- Sheridan College
- York University

# What does it all mean?

- Paints a picture:
  - Qualitative
  - Quantitative
  - Metrics
  - Comparisons
- Overall, a success!



# Looking ahead



- Correlation with student retention?
- Correlation between instruction and opens, clicks, replies?
- Program-specific analysis
  - Targeting more specialized programs?
  - Wider coverage?
- Cost-benefit analysis: 90 hours/year of librarian time

# Can we help students thrive?

- No. 1 predictor of thriving is students' connection with peers, faculty & staff = sense of community
- Libraries/Librarians can play a vital role by enhancing students' sense of belongingness: helping them feel they have a place on campus where people care about them

--Molly Schaller, Associate Professor and Program Co-ordinator,  
University of Dayton



# Questions?

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